

Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Friday, October 9th at 11:30am
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present: First Selectman Gayle Weinstein, Selectman, Town Administrator Tom Landry, Administrative Assistant Randi Derene, Bob Ferguson – Board of Finance, Weston Residents

Selectman David Muller, Selectman Dennis Tracey and Brian Humes of Jacunski Humes Architects joined the meeting via conference call.

This meeting was recorded.

Ms. Weinstein called the meeting to order at: 11:30am

Conference Call with Brian Humes of Jacunski Humes Architects – Mr. Tracey wanted to have a discussion about alternatives to the revised public safety plan. He felt it is important to have alternatives/options and associated costs to present to the public. Mr. Muller stated that he would like to see an assessment that would carry us for many years to come, not just a band aid. Ms. Weinstein stated that she and Mr. Humes have not spoken about this before today's conference call.

Mr. Humes responded: He stated that the project started with the space needs assessment which is his guiding document. He has been trying to squeeze out square footage (mostly from storage and bathroom spaces). The need he is addressing is their needs for today and for tomorrow, they did not just plan the space for future growth. Mr. Humes stated that currently some functions are off-site. Alternatives would be to maintain the department with off-site departments, such as the crime lab.

Mr. Humes stated that the alternative of additions and renovating current space, the cost would be higher. If requested, he can develop this plan and present it in order to prove his statement. The construction time would be longer.

Another alternative would be to build new someplace else. There might be comparable construction costs but lower site development costs. Building on this current site is expensive because of the underground costs (storm water and sanitary systems). Ms. Weinstein said she is meeting with the DEEP on the 27th to see if they can hook up to the elementary school which would save close to \$500,000. .

Mr. Tracey asked Mr. Humes that if we just can't afford the expansion of square footage, and we have to make do with what we have, but upgrade what is necessary, how would he advise us?

Mr. Humes replied that he would need to consider what could get done in phases and find alternatives (can't shut down the communications center while renovating it) so they would need to move them temporarily for an example to a trailer. Vacate, shift, re-occupy... cost of trailers and added construction time... this would all add to the cost of the project.

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Mr. Tracey still wants to hear what the alternatives are, even if they don't satisfy all of our goals. Ms. Weinstein reminded us that the PD just doesn't have enough room to do their job. Even the evidence is stored off site in a storage pod. Also, if renovations begin, we need to get up to code as well to not violate state requirements.

Mr. Muller stated we need to look at all the options, even if we know they won't work.

Mr. Landry said when looking at other options we will find alternatives that we won't want to pursue, but if you want to go through this exercise we can. Options are 1) we build it, 2) move operations off-site to get more space, 3) give the PD more space by taking over some of the town hall space, moving those employees elsewhere.

Ms. Weinstein is still having conversations with Fairfield County Bank about the property next door (law offices). And we can't forget about what we are doing with the employees at the Annex.

Ms. Weinstein asked Mr. Tracey if he would like the Board to ask Mr. Humes to come up with an estimate of what he could do working within the current PD boundaries.

It was suggested Mr. Humes would need to be told (by Chief Troxell) what would need to stay and go if he were to give a new estimate using current space. Mr. Humes commented that he already has a good understanding of these priorities.

Mr. Humes has agreed to submit an estimate for renovating existing PD Space only in time for the next BOS meeting on October 15th.

Mr. Bob Ferguson asked Mr. Humes if there could be an option of building the PD addition at a different location, keeping staff in the old location until the new addition is completed, then creating access to the new addition. Mr. Humes stated there would still need to be renovations to original space; all functions could not be moved into the new addition. Mr. Humes still felt this would bring a higher cost.

Mr. Brian Humes left the conference call.

Discussion/decision regarding a supplemental appropriation for additional cost estimates regarding the Police Department renovations and/or additions.

Ms. Weinstein asked Mr. Tracey if he would still like Mr. Humes to draw up a new plan for an addition/renovation of the space for \$12,000. Mr. Tracey stated that he didn't think it was necessary, especially if the cost would be higher.

Ms. Weinstein stated that if we just fixed up the existing PD Space, we still would need to come up with a solution for the town employees in the Annex. This should still be part of the discussion. We need to discuss cost options related to the Annex, such as the cost of renting new trailers for those employees.

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Ms. Weinstein reminded everyone how important it is to have all Town Offices in one location. It is very frustrating for our residents to come into Town Hall and first learn they are in the wrong building, or that they can't get all their answers in one place.

Social Services should also not be isolated over in the Annex. The Town Administrator should have them closer for some oversight. Or perhaps they should be closer to the Senior Center since that is the population they mostly work with.

To sum up, Ms. Weinstein will get an estimate from Mr. Humes. Mr. Landry will get estimates for a temporary building/trailer on the Town campus. Ms. Weinstein will talk with Fairfield County Bank to see if anything has changed with the law office on the corner, and she will also follow up with the Superintendent to see if they have completed their space needs assessment.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:20pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Randi Derene
Administrative Assistant

Approved: 10/29/15